

Message Text

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S E C R E T BRUSSELS 07335

LIMDIS

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TAGS: PFOR, MARR, NATO, SP, BE

SUBJECT: SPAIN AND NATO

REF: (A) 75 BRUSSELS 3641 (B) 75 BRUSSELS 4511 (C) USNATO 4131

1. SUMMARY. BELGIAN POLICY TOWARDS SPAIN HAS EVOLVED OVER THE LAST YEAR AND CAME CLOSER TO THAT OF THE US. HOWEVER, FOR THE PRESENT, BELGIUM SEES RELATIVELY LITTLE MOVE THAT CAN BE DONE EFFECTIVELY TO INFLUENCE INTERNAL SPANISH DEVELOPMENT IN A FAVORABLE DIRECTION. END SUMMARY.

2. FOREIGN MINISTRY CHIEF OF NATO AFFAIRS, AMB. DENORME, REVIEWED CURRENT BELGIAN POLICY TOWARDS SPAIN WITH US ON JULY 26 AT HIS INITIATIVE. HE NOTED SOME EVOLUTION IN BELGIAN POLICY FROM WHAT IT WAS PRIOR TO FRANCO'S DEATH (REFTELS A AND B). THE BELGIANS HAVE NOTED WITH APPROVAL SPANISH GOVERNMENT EFFORTS TOWARDS LIBERALIZATION AND ARE ENCOURAGED BY THEM. THEY DO NOT BELIEVE

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THAT FINAL SPANISH STEPS TOWARD AN IDEOLOGICALLY

ACCEPTABLE REGIME (I.E. A GOVERNMENT BASED ON FREE ELECTIONS) CAN BE ACHIEVED UNTIL 1977 AT THE EARLIEST. AT THE SAME TIME HE BELIEVES THAT A SPANISH-NATO RAPPROCHEMENT WOULD BE BOTH USEFUL AND DESIRABLE.

3. DENORME TOLD US THAT A HARD CORE OF NATO MEMBERS STILL OPPOSED ANY RAPPROCHEMENT BETWEEN SPAIN AND NATO. HE IDENTIFIED THESE, IN ORDER OF DEGREE OF OPPOSITION, AS NORWAY, THE NETHERLANDS AND DENMARK. HE SAID THAT BELGIUM WAS NO LONGER AMONG THIS GROUP. HE HAD RECENTLY PROPOSED THAT THE SUBJECT OF SPAIN - NATO RELATIONS BE DISCUSSED BETWEEN BELGIUM AND THE NETHERLANDS, IN THE CONTEXT OF THEIR SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP, BUT BEEN TURNED DOWN BY HIS MINISTRY ON ACCOUNT OF WHAT THE BELGIANS UNDERSTOOD DUTCH VIEWS STILL TO BE.

4. LOOKING TOWARDS THE FUTURE, DENORME SAID THAT HE PERSONALLY BELIEVED THAT ANY ATTEMPT TO HASTE IN STRENGTHENING SPANISH TIES WITH NATO WOULD BE "COUNTERPRODUCTIVE". ANY SUCH ATTEMPTS MIGHT REINFORCE THOSE IN SPAIN WHO BELIEVE SPAIN IS GOING TOO FAR TOO FAST AND THUS ADVERSELY AFFECT THE THE DESIRED OUTCOME. HE SAID THAT HE CONSIDERED THAT THE US-SPANISH TREATY (ESPECIALLY ARTICLES V AND VI) HAD PUSHED ALONG WESTERN INFLUENCE ABOUT AS FAR AS IT COULD BE FOR THE MOMENT AND NOTED THAT THE U.S. SENATE'S RECENT DECLARATION O SPAIN HAD PROMPTED A CHARGE OF FLAGRANT INTERNAL INTERVENTION IN SPANISH AFFAIRS BY THE CORTES. HE THOUGHT THAT FURTHER WESTERN EFFORTS TO INFLUENCE SPAIN WOULD PROMOTE FURTHER RESISTANCE ON THE PART OF CERTAIN SPANIARDS WHO STILL WIELD CONSIDERABLE INFLUENCE.

5. DENORME MENTIONED TO US A JULY 15 ARTICLE IN THE SPANISH PERIODICAL, ABC, IN WHICH THE SPANISH AMBASSADOR TO BELGIUM THE MARQUIS DE NERVA WROTE OF A HIGH LEVEL STUDY UNDERWAY ON POSSIBLE FURTHER MILITARY COOPERATION BETWEEN SPAIN AND NATO (WE HAVE NOT SEEN THIS ARTICLE). SPEAKING PERSONALLY BUT IN THIS CONTEXT, HE SUGGESTED THAT THE U.S. SHOULD NOT GET TOO FAR OUT IN FRONT OF

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ITS NATO ALLIES ON THIS SUBJECT, ESPECIALLY AS A SPANISH-EC RAPPROCHEMENT WOULD BE NECESSARY TO ACHIEVE IN ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL TERMS WHATEVER NATO AND THE U.S. MIGHT BE ABLE TO DO IN POLITICAL AND MILITARY TERMS. FIRESTONE

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